

Cate (S.M.)

With regards of the Author

CORRECT OBSERVATION IN MEDICINE:

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

MASSACHUSETTS

HOMŒOPATHIC MEDICAL SOCIETY,

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING IN BOSTON.

APRIL, 1864.

By S. M. CATE, M.D.,

OF SALEM, MASS.

Printed from the Society's Publications.

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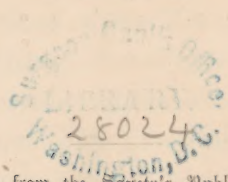
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Correct Observation in Medicine.

MEDICAL men, since the time of Hippocrates and Galen, have toiled at their art or science, and recorded something of the result of their investigations. The bulky volumes of the old masters have gradually fallen into disuse, or been supplanted by successive productions, supposed to embody the more recent discoveries and improvements,—except, perhaps, an occasional master-mind has reared so high a monument of his genius as to carry his works down over generations of smaller men.

All along in the history of medicine are found evidences of the advancing growth of this science. Here and there, back in the centuries, some great truth has found birth and footing, and contributed its part in the structure of medicine in succeeding time. Some of these truths seem to have upheaved the medical world like a volcano, turning and tearing the old deposits without pity, and leaving the mind in wonder at the loss of the old comeliness as well as at the roughness of the new-made landscape.

The laborers in the field of medicine in the past

classified the result of their labors and investigations, both as to facts and fancies, according to the best plans they could devise. It is these laborers who have produced the material that fills the medical storehouses of to-day. Recently, many of the falsities and hindrances of the earlier days of medicine have been laid aside for truer theories and better doctrines, so that the productions of later times possess a value that the old writers do not have.

The material in the works of the authors is arranged according to certain nosological forms. Though often embodying incongruous things, they have still some kind of order, according to which the medical facts are assorted and labelled. Inasmuch as the student cannot re-arrange what he does not understand, here much of his life must be spent. So, also, to the student of riper years, this same store of medical facts is the pabulum to which he must turn to repair the waste that time makes with his memory, or to open the mind to the understanding of subjects not before investigated.

In addition to the works of those who have passed away, we have those of our contemporaries; and, through periodical and quarterly issue, and the lectures and labors of teachers, something of the living thoughts of the men of our own time. And every man has his own individual labor and experience,—his struggles, triumphs, and failures, all burned or pressed into his mind, as lasting and ever-present helps, or as significant and faithful warnings.

By the general judgment of cultivated minds, many statements of the medical authors of the earlier centuries

in the history of medicine are now pronounced to be false. As we retrace the history of the past, we come upon the time when the stump of an amputated limb was dipped in boiling pitch to stanch the flow of blood. When the ligature was applied to the cut blood-vessels, the innovation met a most stout resistance, opposing the supposed temerity of risking one's life upon a single thread. And, if we follow the returning path, we shall find the way strewn with like mementos of errors left behind. In fact, a close examination shows, that there have been periods of improvement, steps that mark the disappearance of old errors and the establishment of new truths.

For such reasons, the "time honored" in medicine is that which is the most crude, ill-digested, and false; and the more recent productions contain the most true and reliable material for our use. Each addition of better theories has been so much help to guide medical observers in right paths. Each new and true doctrine that has come to the hand of the profession discloses old errors and falsities, and the paths to avoid them. They who cultivated the medical field by false theories gathered some wheat mixed with vast quantities of chaff. During past centuries, many of the doctrines held by the schools were false; and hence it is, that most of their labor is, comparatively, of little value to us. Further proof of this is found in the fact, that the most useful studies of the medical man are among the authors of the last hundred years, while research hardly goes back to the works prior to that time, except to gather the material for a history of the art, or to study its history among that material itself. The text-books of our schools are from

the men of the present century, or the last half of the last century; and those books of older date are not commended as containing the most useful food for the student's mind.

These facts show us, that the methods of medical observation of the present time have a progressive face, ever looking onward and upward for greater perfection and more satisfactory fruit. And it is a hopeful indication, that the medicine of the future will progress beyond the medicine of to-day to a degree far exceeding the advancement of to-day beyond that of Paracelsus.

The improvement which has marked the advancement of medical science has two noticeable features: —

1. The accumulation of new material to the store of facts; and —
2. The re-arrangement of the old material more in accordance with the intrinsic relations of the facts themselves.

Under the first head, we find that large and valuable additions are constantly being made to our knowledge. Many diseases, supposed to be new, may not be so; but old diseases under new names, and more fully described. There can be little doubt that diseases, like races in the animal kingdom, sometimes die out; or that, in the progress of events, new types and forms come upon the stage to play their part in human destruction. Diphtheria seems to be an example of this kind; and, though there may be discussion as to whether this is a new disease, or a better description of an old one, still the fulness of our present knowledge places it in the light of a new discovery. Although the number of new and

grave diseases which have been brought to the notice of the profession within the past few years is small, yet there has been a constant increase in our knowledge of those of less magnitude, and especially of peculiar forms of organic lesion. If we take the derangement of almost any portion of the human body, and go into a careful investigation of the different diseases peculiar to it, no very long time will elapse before we shall discover forms of disease nowhere described by medical writers. Almost any of the recent monographs on the liver, the lungs, the heart, the brain, or other organ, will show this to be true.

The great amount of knowledge that can be gained by the careful study of any one of the severe common diseases almost places it in a new light before the mind. When we consider that Laroche has written, on yellow-fever, a monograph of fourteen hundred octavo pages, and left the subject with abundant room for the working of others, it will be seen, that the knowledge yet to be gained of diseases, now somewhat understood, is much more than the knowledge we already have of them.

But the discovery of new facts, and the welding together of old ones by their aid, so as to show the relation and dependence of the whole, is a process by which old and scattered material, with the help of the new, becomes a new structure. The frequent discovery by pathologists of small sacks or cysts (*cysticercus cellulosæ*) in various parts of the human body, as the liver, brain, eye, kidneys, &c., containing together with serum a rudimentary form of animal life, was a puzzle to them for many centuries. It was also known that man was sometimes in-

fested with various kinds of entozoa, among which was the *tænia solium*. This subject has received much attention, and Küchenmeister shows us that each one of these cysts contains a tape-worm in a rudimentary form. If the flesh of an animal containing these cysts is eaten, and one of them enters the stomach undestroyed by cooking, the head and neck (scolex) of the young tænia, which projects in an inverted fashion into the interior, is digested or broken away. The head, being liberated, everts itself through its hollow neck; and, by means of four suckers and a double circle of hooks with which it is armed, it attaches itself to the mucous membrane of the intestines, and, firmly adhering, commences its growth. Segments or joints begin to be developed from the neck, and the first formed joints are always pushed farther and farther downwards by those more recently formed. Thus the joints farthest from the head are the most mature; and, when they are ripe, freighted with thousands of very minute eggs, they break off, and are expelled from the body. Upon finding a lodgment on grass or fruit, or on falling into water, they burst; and the eggs, dispersed through the water, may be eaten or drunk by animals, especially by swine. In the stomach of these animals, the egg-shell gives way, and the embryo or minute globular vesicle, armed with six microscopic hooklets, makes its escape. By means of these hooklets, it seems to penetrate the tissue of the intestines, and either actively works its way, or is passively conveyed by the circulation to its final resting-place in the muscular tissue. When many of these eggs are eaten by a hog, and the vesicles proceed as just stated, its flesh appears as though it

were thickly filled with hailstones, and is known as measly pork. Each one of these lumps is capable of growing into a cyst, and contains the rudimentary tape-worm, incapable of further development or change during the life of the animal in which it is imbedded; but, on the death of the animal, it may go the round of metamorphosis just described.

To prove that the *tenia solium* is developed from the *cysticercus cellulosæ*, Küchenmeister performed a crucial experiment on a criminal condemned to death: he administered, during three days of his life, seventy-five *cysticerci*. On dissection, forty-eight hours after execution, he found ten young *tenia* in the intestines, six of which were destitute of their hooks; but the remaining four were attached by them to the mucous membrane.

To prove that the *cysticercus cellulosæ* is produced from the egg of the *tenia solium*, some pigs were fed with segments of tape-worm, and subsequently killed. The flesh was found filled with the *cysticerci*, in different stages of development, from the first commencement to the perfect formation, in proportion to the amount eaten and the time which had elapsed; while a pig of the same litter, not so fed, was entirely free from this formation.* Thus from experiments, simple in themselves, but direct and conclusive, scattered and hitherto inexplicable phenomena were brought into connected relations; and the riddle was solved.

Beside this striking illustration of the complete elucidation of a previously obscure subject, there are many

* See British Journal of Homœopathy, vol. xvi, page 81. Also Küchenmeister's Manual of Animal and Vegetable Parasites.

others that would illustrate this point; and still others which only partially serve to do this, because we lack some of the connections of the facts; and, lastly, there are a large number of facts not yet understood or classified. Of the first, the relation between the *acarus scabiei* and the itch is a well-marked example. So the direct relation between apoplexy and the thrombus that occludes a small artery, thus cutting off the nourishment from a small portion of the brain, causing it to soften and become disorganized, and into which the blood is injected from the bursting of a neighboring blood-vessel, may be taken as an additional illustration.

The relation between lenticular cataract and diabetes mellitus, and also the connection of a saccharine condition of the blood with amaurosis, have not yet been so established in the different steps as to be more than presumptive truths. But the wide field that opens beyond, containing the vast number of facts which as yet have no intelligent interpretation, shows that much remains to be done. Cancer is a most fearful example of this kind. Through all the ages, cancer has been known as a fact; but how it is produced no one has yet been able to tell, and its cure is as much beyond man's reach as a true knowledge of it is beyond his understanding. Tubercle is another example of a medical fact that is known most intimately in its course and termination, but whose remote as well as immediate cause, and also its cure, are still unknown.

Similar statements might be made with regard to our ignorance of the cause and successive steps in the production of, or ability to cure, a large number of diseases.

An analysis of certain phenomena, before classified together, has occasionally shown, that what is often described as one disease was made up of elements having general symptoms common to several different diseases. Thus facts, already the common property of the profession, have, from time to time, had more true assignment of place, separating and re-arranging, according to the best knowledge of the time. Each year witnesses the bursting of some bundle of phenomena, whose separated elements are thenceforth to walk abroad in the arena of the mind in their own distinctness of individuality. The limit to this process no one can now foresee. Thus the various phenomena formerly denominated typhus or typhoid fever have now come to be separated. A portion of the symptoms formerly so classified are now known to be produced by certain diseases of the brain. Another portion are arranged under the head of pyæmia, or the poisoning of the blood by the absorption of pus, or other product of disease. The liver sometimes fails to separate certain waste matters from the blood; and the blood, in its journey through the system, carries the noxious matter to remotest parts, producing a series of phenomena closely resembling those just mentioned. A saccharine condition of the blood, in an acute form, produces similar symptoms. There can be little doubt, that other organic changes or faults may produce symptoms of a like nature, especially derangements of the excretory organs of the body, of which the liver and kidneys are the most important.

When other derangements, now studied as typhus, are fully investigated, and placed in their proper dis-

ting classification, each such separation becomes not only a case of correct observation in medicine, but is itself a help to further advancement in the same direction. After all the cases that possess a marked distinctness have been separated, there would still be left the peculiar gastric and intestinal catarrh, the progressive stages of which mark the simple, uncomplicated development of the typhus or typhoid fever; and this disease by itself has abundant claim on our study and labor, ere it shall be wholly amenable to medical efforts.

Through the whole range of disease, the same separating process goes on. A close and individual study of those affections of the internal organs, that have always been enveloped in some obscurity, has opened distinctions where only a mass of disease was seen before. Within the life of three generations, the entire system of the physical examinations of the organs of the chest, of the stomach and abdomen, of the generative and urinary organs, by physical signs in the living body, has been made. By rules already established, and made applicable to the different parts of the body, their pathological condition is often determined with a great degree of certainty before the anatomist has done his office. By such examination, and the disclosure of the particular organ and tissue that is affected, the exact nature of the disease is laid open to the mind. What was formerly classified as consumption is now separated into several affections of the organs of the chest. Though each of these distinct affections is understood and recognized, consumption is still to be met with as before, the "*opprobrium medicorum*." Nevertheless, until con-

sumption can be ranked among curable diseases, there is much gain to the race in rescuing those who seem to have consumption, but have not, from the doom their former classification pronounced upon them.

The division which has taken place in the disease formerly called dyspepsia may be considered quite illustrative of this point. The time was when almost all the long-standing and obstinate diseases of the stomach and bowels were studied and treated under the name of dyspepsia. This big bundle of ailments got the respects of the doctor in the gross. In fact, it was the most common custom for the M.D.s to load and fire off the full weight of the college wisdom at the name itself, leaving the poor victim with his acidity, cardialgia, or colic, wholly uncured.

For a generalization of still more undetermined ailments, the term *scrofula* has served its day. In the language of a medical writer to his fellow-doctors, it was made a sort of big bag, into which were pitched all the obscure and endless ailments that the faculty could neither understand nor cure. It is to be hoped, that many of these diseased conditions are, or at some future time will be, understood, arranged according to their real qualities, and cured, to the credit of the profession and the comfort of the race.

The result of this process of analysis and separation has been in all such cases, that the extraneous matter which has been thrown off has left the unencumbered disease standing in clearer outline, easier to be understood, and all the more likely to be mastered. This, as well as the bringing together of apparently dissimilar

phenomena, and pointing out their common origin and relation, has helped to reconcile seeming contradictions, and to lead on to greater improvements of the science.

The gathering of new facts, and the careful observation of those already known so as to establish the relation that belongs to each respectively, is among the highest attainments of a good observer. Many facts with regard to electricity were known to the world before the time of Franklin and his contemporaries. Franklin, in the Divine Providence, was led to gather them in his mind; and then to observe, and by experiment learn, new facts, which served as links to establish the relation, and mark the unity, of the whole phenomena. So too, no doubt, such facts as Jenner observed, and which were made by him to show the connection between grease in the horse and the small-pox, had been seen for centuries; but none before had been able to bring them into their true relations, and evolve their use. So the method of the action of medicine in the cure of disease had been observed as isolated facts for a long period before the time of Hahnemann; but it remained for him to gather up the fragments, scattered through the record, and, like Franklin, to forge the links that formed the chain into a priceless whole. This was one of the grandest examples of correct observation in medicine that the world has seen. It involved the gathering of old facts for their proper classification, and the observation of new ones direct from the hand of nature.

The parallelism between Franklin and Hahnemann as correct observers, and as to the treatment they received at the hands of the men of their time, is somewhat remark-

able. Franklin published his facts and experiments to the world, showing that it was the same fluid evolved by the electrical machine, and by the clouds as lightning. Learned societies wrote volumes to show that Franklin was wrong. His theories were reasoned upon: mathematics were brought to show that his facts and theories were not true. The only reply Franklin would give, was, "Let them repeat my experiments." So Hahnemann gave to the world his facts and experiments with regard to the law of cure, *similia similibus curantur*. The learned societies go on to this day reasoning about Hahnemann's statement, and showing by mathematical demonstration that his facts and conclusions are wrong, giving an example of a method of observation not worthy of imitation.

How could the facts given by Franklin be measured or verified, except by the repetition of the only experiments that could have any bearing on the question? And how can the facts dependent upon the truth of the homœopathic law be determined, except by experiments competent to settle such questions? What amount of reasoning could have answered the question as to the prophylactic power against small-pox of the smallest part of a drop of matter taken from a cow with a given disease? Volumes could be written against the probability of it. The weight of the matter as against the weight of the man would tax the mathematicians, and the difference would be so much that the thing would be shown to be absurd. And then, again, a child might swallow many times as much, and not die. Under like rules, in another way, Hahnemann's great

discovery is attempted to be brought. His facts are met by fancies, and his deductions by reasonings upon other subjects wholly inapplicable to the question in hand. The result of doing for Hahnemann what Franklin invited his contemporaries to do for him, in repeating his experiments, is presented you to-day in the life of the thousands of homœopathic physicians scattered over the world. Each one of them has, more or less perfectly, measured the facts and deductions given by Hahnemann with the only measure that can come near the question, and has judged from the only basis that can lead to just conclusions. Each one stands before the world, having many times repeated the experiments directed by Hahnemann, and witnessed their verification. To each one, the conviction of the truth of the homœopathic law grows stronger year by year. Each one knows also, that the application of the law is not always well accomplished; and, when it is not, it must fail of its good fruit. But, of this, more further on.

How can the principles already set forth in this address be made useful to us in the practice of medicine according to the homœopathic law? Dr. Scott, in a Prize Essay awarded by the Parisian Homœopathic Society, in 1848, announces the doctrine that the homœopathic law is a law of cure, and not a law of disease; and hence that its application is in no way influenced by the pathological theories of any succeeding time. This idea, clearly stated by Hahnemann, receives a masterly treatment at the hand of Dr. Scott; and the doctrine seems to have passed into a fixed form in the mind of the homœopathic

world. The confirmations of it are strong, as the pointing out, by Hahnemann, the remedies for the treatment of typhus fever, epidemic among the opposing armies of his day, as well as the treatment of Asiatic cholera; and, in both these fearful diseases, the successful course was marked out without seeing a single case.

Of course, the pathology was only studied mentally: no post mortem had given its light to him. This is fully admitted, as also that Hahnemann had a most marvellous success in his own practice: still there is another side to the question. All minds do not resolve the mass of symptoms presented in disease into their original elements, and recombine them in their natural order with the rapidity so easy to Hahnemann. And he was not always successful in this work; for he sometimes treated cases without success, that were easily cured by other methods. There are many men among us, who possess the power of such rapid analysis and understanding of cases of disease, that they seem to be hardly conscious of the steps in the process by which their conclusions are reached. Such men sometimes talk of symptoms, much after the fashion set forth by Dr. Scott; but the less gifted plodders admire more than they follow. But these men go swimmingly on only so far as their powers extend. The incurable diseases are still incurable to them as to us below them.

That Hahnemann made a mental analysis of the phenomena presented in each case of disease, so far as he could, we may be sure from his own writings. He tells us to "select a remedy that presents the most accurate picture of the disease;" and again, that "the remedy should

correspond to the most important symptoms of the disease." How can we form an accurate picture of a disease in the mind, while we have no knowledge of the relation of the different phenomena, as to which is cause and which effect? And, again, disease is not always a unit, but may have more than one focus: there may be more than one point of departure from health. Thus one may have pulmonary consumption and contract small-pox, or a person with cancer may have Asiatic cholera: in fact, there are many diseases to which man is liable that are not affected by the presence of other disease in the system at the same time. In such case, no correct picture of the disease can be formed, without separating, in the mind, those symptoms that are proper to the disease from those that are accidental to it. To do this, a correct understanding of what belongs to each is necessary. Such an understanding is reached only through a good knowledge of the history of each disease and its accidents. Those diseases that are not understood can be approached, but not mastered.

A correct theory with regard to any disease puts the phenomena of the disease before the mind in their natural order, so that each symptom finds its proper place; one as cause, others as successive steps, and others as the legitimate fruit of all which has preceded. So also in the presentation of any case to the mind that does not easily find a nosological arrangement: if the proper relations of the symptoms can be understood, the value of each will be known, and each assigned its place in the selection of the remedy. In no other way is there any certainty that accidental will not take the place of

essential things, or that ailments from long-standing disease will not be mixed with the symptoms of an acute affection. But by such an understanding of each diseased action, both as to its external symptoms and its essential nature, each symptom is weighed in the balance of the mind, and receives that attention which its importance demands.

A successful prosecution of correct observation in medicine leads us, then, to the cultivation and acquisition of accurate knowledge concerning the history of all diseases which will bear a nosological arrangement, in order that our minds may be stored with such knowledge as will enable us to meet and minister to all the forms that claim our offices. And when such knowledge is attained, in some good measure, it requires of us also to approach each case of diseased action reverently, that its interior workings may open to our minds, and that thus we may be able to analyze the case by itself, putting each part mentally in its proper place, and making up an equation that belongs to that case alone. Thus will the spell of names be broken. The nosological arrangement will be used as a means to conduct the mind to its work, and bring the material for the occasion within the working grasp of the mind; and also as suggestive of the things common and proper to different kinds and forms of disease of a similar nature: but here it will leave the mind to work its way in the analysis and construction required. But, if the cause is taken for the effect, or the mind rests with the name, taking it for granted that all the things that the name requires are in the case to which it can be applied, and then a medicine is given only because it

has been known to cure a disease of the same name, we shall fall away from all observation but the most crude and ill-digested, and may come, from failure in practice, to denounce a law that we are too weak or too unfaithful to use aright.

But this part of our subject is of so much importance that a few illustrations will be ventured upon. It is told of Hahnemann, that a man presented himself to be cured of sycotic warts. Hahnemann talked with the patient, and gave him some dry powders. The patient was cured in a short time, and an observing student inquired of Hahnemann for the remedy: he told him the symptoms, and referred him to the *materia medica* to find it for himself. The student worked faithfully, but failed, and at last purloined the secret from Hahnemann's record, when he went to him to know how *Chamomilla* could cure sycotic warts: to which Hahnemann replied, "Do you see those general symptoms? no other remedy but *Chamomilla* produces them. How could you give any thing else?"

A man of later times relates that he cured a skin-disease with a minute dose of *Lycopodium*. The *Lycopodium* was given because it corresponded with the general symptoms. A case of eczema that resisted a long and careful course of treatment was cured, very rapidly, with a few doses of *Apis mellifica* given to remove an intervening dropsy. I have known most obstinate forms of eczema cured with *Phosphorus*, when the correspondence between the symptoms produced by *Phosphorus* on the skin and the skin-disease was not accurate; but this form of skin-disease, and the one produced by

Phosphorus, both agreed in being worse in cold, but better or well in warm weather. So, also, I have seen violent neuralgia of the face, arising from derangement of the stomach, repeatedly cured, in the same patient, with Antimonium crudum, although the patient at the time had no sign of trouble of the stomach in any way. A true understanding of the case came from a careful statement by the patient of the preceding troubles, from which it was seen that the stomach was the seat of disease, though not then making any expression of it, except through the neuralgia.

A little reflection upon these not very wonderful cases will lead to the conclusion, that in each of them the cure was accomplished by the exhibition of a medical power of the exact measure of the diseased action. In the first case the sycosis was only a symptom thrown out from a general derangement of the system, and Chamomilla cured the general derangement. In what that consisted, the record does not show. The same may be said of the second case; but here various organic derangements suggest themselves as forming a part of the general group. The third case unfolds itself more fully by disclosing a general derangement in which disease of the kidneys was a most important element. At first the eczema was kept up by certain uric acid salts, which were thrown upon the skin, instead of their usual elimination by the kidneys. A further extension of the kidney disease produced the dropsy, which first brought the kidney affection to notice, and determined the selection of the right remedy. The fourth case would have a similar interpretation with a slight difference. Cold, on some persons,

without impairing the general activity, produces a derangement of the kidneys, by which a minute portion of waste matter of a peculiar kind would be retained in the system, which, on being determined to the skin, may produce eczema. Phosphorus cured, because it corresponded to the various steps, stages, and degrees of the process. The neuralgia and stomach trouble needs little comment, except to say, that it illustrates a large class of cases in which the real seat of the disease is at a wide range from its expression; and also the principle that the originating point should in all cases be most diligently sought, as of most vital importance to be understood, not only with serious and malignant diseases, but also with more simple affections.

But, to illustrate in a general way, we will take scarlatina, cured by Hahnemann with Belladonna, and suppose the elements that entered into it could be represented by the letters A, B, C, and D. Inquiry into a case that presents for consideration to-day may show that it has the elements A, B, C, and D; and also another added, not common to the comparing standard, debility, represented by E., and to which Belladonna did not correspond. A careful investigation might show, that the demands of the new combination of symptoms would be met by Arsenicum, which had the new element, as well as, in a good measure, the old combination. So, in other cases, any extent of variation would be measured and provided for; furthermore, any case may have certain elements to-day that may be met with an appropriate power, but to-morrow other elements may be added, or some taken away, in each of which cases, each day must have

its proper selection of remedy, or else it is the old work of the routinist, applying a remedy of one name to a disease of another name, without a careful investigation of the nature of either.

This use of the homœopathic law is both intelligent and accurate. It is thus that each case comes to be treated by itself, yet it has the converging influence of the light from the past resting upon it, while all the truths of the present are doing their best offices for the work in hand.

The science of medicine, in such a view, is a subject of very great magnitude. Man contains within himself elements drawn from all the kingdoms of nature. All the sciences go out from man, and return to him. All minister to his use, as all in some way contribute to his physical well-being. Each of the various substances that enter into the human body, when without the body, have their peculiar science and classification. A correct understanding of man, physically, leads to an acquisition of a good measure of knowledge of all these sciences.

Man is first to be studied in his normal state. All his physical anatomy is to be exhibited to the eye of the body, and all the vital operations of each and every part are to be laid open to the eye of the mind. This, in its fulness, is man in health. And, as opposed to its manifold harmonies, we have each and all its parts acting in discordant and jarring ways; the story of all which is found (as far as written) in the history of disease. The breadth of this history has already been hinted at; and we may add, that a well-digested understanding of it demands some knowledge of all the sciences, and that

even with such collateral helps disease will still present such an amount of matter to be mastered as may well stagger the stoutest courage. Under the pressure of such feelings, many men divide off their work, and confine themselves to the investigation of some single branch of the science, or to the understanding of some single disease.

But notwithstanding the whole domain of science underlies that of medicine, sustaining and nurturing it; and the vastness of the range of thought, to which this view invites the mind, makes the science of medicine seem as insurmountable as the highest mountain tops, and often as rugged and pathless, — yet patient toil has discovered an opening pathway, or planted pilgrim resting-places well up the craggy sides.

The best knowledge of medicine, the truest theories of disease that our age affords, are but idle tools to the mind till brought into use in the cure of disease. The practical result always seems easy, when only the clear truths stand before us; but, when brought down to their application, difficulties often stand in the way of success. We do not always get a correct statement of the facts that belong to the case in hand: some misjudged notion leads the patient and friends to mistake the case, giving symptoms that do not belong to it, or withholding important facts for some supposed good end; and thus the physician is misled by others. Or, again, the fault is with the physician, who approaches the case with some favorite theory in his mind, and, in hunting for material to confirm and strengthen it, collects his facts and arranges them according to his peculiar wishes in-

stead of according to their natural order, and thus misleads himself. Sometimes observations are taken from some angular points, or from a wrong position with relation to the facts: so a false picture is taken; and all will bear me witness of the difficulty of throwing off a wrong impression, or ridding the mind of a false picture of a case of disease, whether coming from any of these, or from other causes.

We sometimes fail because we cannot command necessary conditions; and, again, because, after the disease is rightly observed and understood, the right remedy lies hidden in the bosom of the earth, or blooming in some far-off wilderness.

But, with all these deductions, the progress of our school of medicine is steadily on, year by year winning its way to the favor of the people by its practical good fruit.

Within the homœopathic ranks are several divisions or separate schools, who approach the law of cure from different directions, and operate it in different ways. One division looks to Hahnemann, and attempts to distil from him and his *Organon* all the medical wisdom that the world needs. Others take the law of cure to be true, but attempt to tax all collateral and subsidiary helps, turning them towards the law of cure, that, by enlarging and deepening its foundations, and building a symmetrical and normal structure upon it, the law may gradually assert its conquering march over all the field of disease. To the same end, other sections are working, but in another way. Theirs it is to command the power to establish the *similimum*, under the law, in each case in hand,

supposing that its broad mantle is already unfolded to the widest demands of all human want. The end with both is the same; namely, the more rapid and sure cure of disease. To this common end may we all aim, leaving each free to pursue the path that seems good to him, only hoping that each will contribute his part to **Correct Observation in Medicine!**

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